

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 576

By Cooper B

A RESOLUTION to express support for free legal representation for Tennessee citizens in matters regarding denial of unemployment benefits.

WHEREAS, as unemployment in Tennessee continues to rise in various counties across the state, a number of Tennessee citizens have found their claims for unemployment compensation benefits denied by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and have found their pathway to appeal blocked by lack of financial resources to obtain legal representation; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis Area Legal Services, Inc., which receives both state and federal funding, does not represent Tennesseans on matters in denial of unemployment benefits and those unable to pay for an attorney must pursue litigation pro se; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development has state-funded lawyers defending its departmental actions when a claimant is denied unemployment benefits; and

WHEREAS, such denied claimants, citizens of Tennessee, should have free legal representation before the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and before any court that has jurisdiction in matters regarding denial of unemployment benefits; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby express our support for free legal representation for the citizens of Tennessee in matters regarding denial of unemployment benefits before the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and before any court that has jurisdiction in such matters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.